

# Herbert Hoover National Historic Site General Management Plan

## *Alternative E*

(No Action)

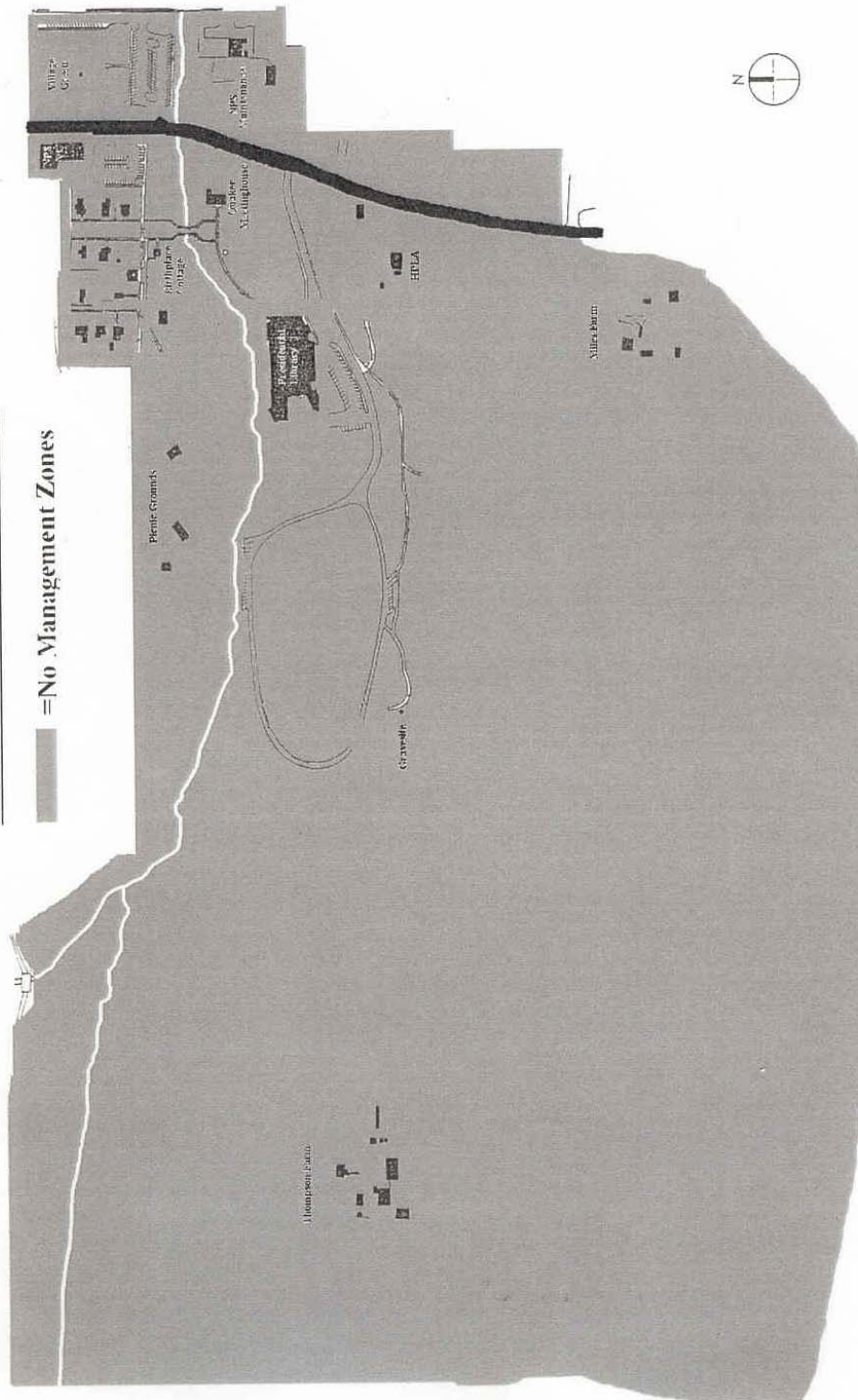
### **Concept:**

This alternative, provided as a baseline for comparison, would maintain current resource and visitor experience conditions. Management of cultural and natural resources would remain reactive, rather than proactive. This alternative would not provide additional visitor services, nor build any new facilities. It would not meet all legal mandates. Where still suitable and feasible, the 1970 Master Plan and its amendment (1978) would continue to provide primary management guidance. The NPS, however, would not carry out all of its recommendations.



## MANAGEMENT ZONES

=No Management Zones



# MANAGEMENT ZONES - ALTERNATIVE E

## **Management Zones:**

The historic site would continue to be managed without delineated management zones. The following management prescriptions would be applied to the site.

### **Management Prescriptions for this Alternative**

#### **Resource Management**

The NPS would follow the 1978 Addendum to the Master Plan in its management of historic structures. It would rehabilitate historic structures in the Birthplace Cottage neighborhood to reflect the historic scene in Hoover's boyhood. It would use historic structures as employee residences, interpretation and visitor services facilities, staff offices, and education facilities. Many of these facilities would remain in the 100-year regulatory flood zone of "Hoover Creek". It would restore the external features of the buildings at the Isaac Miles Farm to the farm's period of significance, 1874-1885. The Historic Site would continue to use the farm home as an employee residence. The interior of other farm buildings would continue as storage for maintenance equipment and supplies. The Historic Site would manage visitor use of historic resources in a way that would not threaten their integrity.

The NPS would use the 1970 Master Plan to guide the transition between the Hoover neighborhood restoration and reconstruction with the surrounding area. It would use landscaping to buffer future development outside the Historic Site's boundaries that might detract from the character of the Historic Site.

The NPS would preserve and rehabilitate historic structures to maintain them in good condition. Historic structures would continue to serve as staff housing or storage space. The NPS would manage the cultural landscape to support the commemorative character of the area.

The NPS would recognize that the small size of the prairie reconstruction would encumber its complete restoration as a functional ecosystem without a very significant investment of fiscal and human resources. The NPS, therefore, would not attempt to restore a complete prairie ecosystem, but it would manage the prairie community in a manner that would complement the spacious, commemorative setting of the Historic Site. The prairie also would provide a natural boundary between the Historic Site and Interstate Highway 80 and other modern distractions.

The NPS would continue to follow the 1970 Master Plan to transform former agricultural areas into native prairie. It would take resource management actions designed to restore the scientific integrity of the prairie environment including the establishment of an inventory and monitoring program. It would continue its present natural resource management actions including prescribed burns of sections of the prairie to improve

populations of native grasses and forbs, and suppress the growth of invasive plants. The NPS would continue to monitor the prairie for undesirable exotic or invasive species. It would control such growth with localized treatments. The NPS would use seeding of prairie species to assist the natural diversification of the plant community. The NPS would not reintroduce animal species to the prairie, but would consider animal species that colonize prairie environments in any management decisions. The NPS would take minimal actions to stabilize the banks of the tributary to the West Branch of the Wapsinonoc Creek. The NPS would determine if modifications to the Historic Site's infrastructure, the streambed of the Creek, and its associated riparian areas would mitigate flood damage to natural and cultural resources. The NPS would implement actions that would benefit both the natural resources and the interpretive commemorative nature of the Historic Site. If public use appeared to jeopardize any resources, the NPS would modify public access and use to mitigate the problem.

The NPS would monitor adverse impacts on the Creek caused by storm-water runoff and pollutants from the maintenance operation. The Historic Site would take actions to mitigate this impact on the creek. Natural resources would remain in a highly modified condition in this developed area.

The NPS would continue to manage the section of this zone adjacent to Parkside Drive as maintained ground cover including non-native grass species. It would manage the section of this zone adjacent to the Thompson Farm buildings as agricultural land or as low-maintenance ground cover.

The visitor center would be maintained in a clean, safe, and welcoming manner.

The NPS would monitor the condition of the historic Boy Scout picnic shelter to determine the impact of unrestricted public use. If the studies concluded that such use represented a long-term threat to the structure, the NPS would limit use of the shelter. The landscape would remain highly manipulated and intensively maintained including the use of non-native species of grass. The NPS would continue to care for the trees and mow the lawns on a regular basis.

## **Interpretation**

The NPS would complement interpretation at the HHPL by emphasizing Hoover's boyhood in West Branch. Interpretation would continue to follow the direction of the 1978 Addendum to the Master Plan to provide programs for year-round day use for people of all ages and interest levels. Volunteers and paid staff would offer informal interpretation at the Birthplace Cottage, the Friends Meeting House, the Blacksmith Shop, and other historic structures. Guided tours of the Historic Site would take place only after fulfilling staffing requirements at the visitor center and the historic structures. Educational groups would receive an orientation in the visitor center and a guided tour of the Historic Site.

The visitor center would remain the focus for visitor services through a staffed information desk, a few orientation exhibits, a short orientation audio-visual program, a cooperating association sales area, a special exhibit room, staff offices, and public rest rooms.

A limited number of directional signs would guide both traffic and pedestrians. People visiting the HHPL before the visitor center would receive an orientation to the Historic Site through the HHPL's distribution of the Historic Site's free folder. People arriving first at the Birthplace Cottage would receive an orientation through contact with staff stationed at the cottage.

The NPS would not follow the 1978 Addendum to the Master Plan that proposed adaptive use of the first floor of the P.T. Smith house as an orientation center for organized group visits because of potential traffic congestion. The structure would remain in place, but not open to the public.

The Travelers Information System would continue to provide orientation by broadcasting a message to travelers on Interstate 80. Its message would promote exhibits, programs, and special events available at the Historic Site, the HHPL, and West Branch.

Informal contacts with park rangers and occasional guided tours would interpret the area for visitors. A wayside exhibit overlooking the Isaac Miles Farm would interpret the farm's connection to Herbert Hoover. Visitors would not have access to the interior of any of the historic structures.

A few wayside exhibits, an audio station, and a free publication would interpret the tallgrass prairie environment and the Historic Site's ongoing efforts to reconstruct that environment. Occasional guided tours for visitors and environmental education programs for schoolchildren would provide opportunities for an enriched experience.

The NPS would continue to use the visitor center for orientation, cooperating association sales, and limited exhibits.

The NPS would present interpretive programs to complement special events held in this zone.

### **Visitor Capacity and Circulation**

To recognize and mitigate adverse impacts of visitation, the NPS would document baseline conditions of cultural resources; then periodically monitor and record resource conditions. Conditions of the Birthplace Cottage, the Friends Meetinghouse, the Schoolhouse, the Blacksmith Shop, and the reconstructed prairie would receive primary emphasis. If public use appeared to jeopardize any resources, the NPS would modify its interpretation and/or resource management programs to mitigate the problem.

The NPS would maintain the existing parking facilities at the visitor center. Parking would accommodate the average peak visitation in July and August. Special events at the Historic Site would utilize local parking facilities in West Branch for overflow parking. The existing paved paths and other walkways would connect visitor facilities, historic structures, and other significant resources.

The NPS would maintain the existing parking and paved roads. The HHPL Parking Lot would accommodate the average peak visitation in July and August. Special events at the HHPL would utilize local parking facilities in West Branch and edges of existing roads for overflow parking. The existing paved paths and other walkways would connect visitor facilities, historic structures, and other significant resources.

To recognize and mitigate adverse impacts of visitation upon natural resources, the NPS would document baseline conditions of resources; then periodically monitor and record resource conditions. Conditions of the prairie and creek would receive primary emphasis. If public use appeared to jeopardize any resources, the NPS would restrict or eliminate public access.

The NPS would maintain existing sidewalks.

### **Visitor Facilities to be Expanded, Removed, or Restricted**

The NPS would not expand or remove any visitor facility. It would limit access to any historic structure believed threatened by unlimited public use.

If the resource monitoring program indicated that visitor use near any wayside exhibit had threatened natural resources, the NPS would relocate or remove the wayside exhibit. Visitor circulation would remain restricted to established footpaths. If the resource monitoring program indicated that any of the footpaths had threatened natural resources, the NPS would relocate or remove the footpath.

The NPS would install additional picnic tables if picnic use increased.

### **Administrative, Maintenance, and Utilities**

The visitor center and historic structures would continue to provide administrative office space.

Historic structures would continue to serve as staff housing and storage space. Maintenance would continue to use structures at the Isaac Miles farm to store equipment and materials.

### **Offices, Maintenance Facilities, and Utilities**

The existing maintenance facility would be maintained in the floodplain.

## **Adjacent Land Use**

The NPS would encourage the City of West Branch to develop and follow growth policies and zoning that would support the open and spacious setting of the Historic Site. Areas of particular attention would include properties on Downey and Wetherell Streets, Parkside Drive, and in areas along the northwest boundary proposed for development.

## **Partners**

The NPS would maintain its cooperation with the HHPL, the Hoover Family, and the City of West Branch within the limits of the Historic Site's mission. It also would engage in cooperative ventures with the Hoover Presidential Library Association, Inc.

## **Staffing**

Several vacant positions would remain unfilled due to insufficient base funding.

## **Signs**

Directional signs would guide vehicular traffic and pedestrians to the Historic Site's facilities, historic structures, and other resources.

## **Boundary Adjustments**

The NPS would not propose any adjustments to its boundary.

## **Summary of Needed and Allowable Changes**

No major changes.

## **COSTS**

No additional costs.

## **PLAN IMPLEMENTATION**

Present management practices would continue to take place under the direction of the 1970 Master Plan and the 1978 Addendum to the Master Plan.

## **Additional Studies and Plans**

- Long Range Interpretation Plan/Education Plan
- Historic Resource Study
- Administrative History